



DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

Submission for OMB Review; Comment Request

The Department of Commerce will submit to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for clearance the following proposal for collection of information under the provisions of the Paperwork Reduction Act (44 U.S.C. Chapter 35).

Agency: National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).

Title: Expanded Vessel Monitoring System Requirement in the Pacific Coast Groundfish Fishery.

OMB Control Number: 0648-0573.

Form Number(s): None.

Type of Request: Regular (extension of a currently approved information collection).

Number of Respondents: 1,000.

Average Hours Per Response: VMS installation: 4 hours; VMS maintenance: 4 hours; installation, exemption and activation reports: 5 minutes each; and declaration reports: 4 minutes.

Burden Hours: 771.

Needs and Uses: This request is for extension of a currently approved information collection.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) has established large-scale depth-based management areas, referred to as Groundfish Conservation Areas (GCAs), where groundfish fishing is prohibited or restricted. These areas were specifically designed to reduce the catch of species while allowing healthy fisheries to continue in areas and with gears where little incidental catch of overfished species is likely to occur. Because NOAA needs methods to effectively enforce area restrictions, certain commercial fishing vessels are required to install and use a vessel monitoring system (VMS) that automatically send hourly position reports. Exemptions from the reporting requirement are available for inactive vessels or vessels fishing outside the monitored area. The vessels are also required to declare what gear will be used.

To ensure the integrity of the GCAs and Rockfish Conservation Areas, a pilot VMS program was implemented on January 1, 2004. The pilot program required vessels registered to Pacific Coast groundfish fishery limited entry permits to carry and use VMS transceiver units while fishing off the coasts of Washington, Oregon and California. On January 1, 2007, the VMS program coverage was expanded on to include all open access fisheries in addition to the limited entry fisheries. Finally, in 2010, NMFS expanded the declaration reports to include several more limited entry categories.

Affected Public: Business or other for-profit.

Frequency: On occasion.

Respondent's Obligation: Mandatory.

This information collection request may be viewed at reginfo.gov. Follow the instructions

to view Department of Commerce collections currently under review by OMB.

Written comments and recommendations for the proposed information collection should be sent within 30 days of publication of this notice to OIRA_Submission@omb.eop.gov or fax to (202) 395-5806.

Dated: April 10, 2017.

Sarah Brabson,

NOAA PRA Clearance Officer.

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